

Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend claims 1, 3-9, 11, 13-15, 18 and 19 as follows. Please cancel claim 10 without prejudice to continued prosecution. Please add new claims 21 and 22. The claims and their status are shown below.

1. (Currently Amended) A batter mix for use in the coating of food products, wherein said batter mix ~~characterised in that it~~ comprises 0.5-10% dry weight, ~~preferably 1.5-8% dry weight~~ starch alkenyl succinate and 20-98% dry weight, ~~preferably 25-80% dry weight~~ bleached and/or oxidised starch.

2. (Original) A mix according to claim 1 wherein the starch alkenyl succinate is starch octenyl succinate.

3. (Currently Amended) A mix according to claim 1 ~~or claim 2~~ wherein the starch alkenyl succinate is starch sodium octenyl succinate.

4. (Currently Amended) A mix according to claim 1 ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ wherein the starch alkenyl succinate is derived from a starch selected from potato starch, maize starch, wheat starch, rice starch, tapioca starch and a mixture of two or more thereof.

5. (Currently Amended) A mix according to claim 1 ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ wherein the starch alkenyl succinate is derived from a waxy starch.

6. (Currently Amended) A mix according to claim 1 ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ wherein the starch alkenyl succinate is stabilised.

7. (Currently Amended) A mix according to claim 1 ~~any preceding claim~~ wherein the bleached and/or oxidised starch is derived from maize starch, wheat starch and mixtures thereof.

8. (Currently Amended) A mix according to claim 1 further ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ comprising a ~~further~~ starchy material selected from: flour, native starch, modified starch and mixtures thereof.

9. (Currently Amended) A mix according to claim 1 ~~one of the preceding claims~~ further comprising water or a water-miscible liquid in a weight ratio of 0.5:1 to 1:1.5 with respect to the total starch content of the mix.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) A process for the production of a batter for coating food products including the step of mixing:

- 0.5-10% dry weight, ~~preferably 1.5-10% dry weight~~ starch alkenyl succinate;
- 20-98% dry weight, ~~preferably 25-80% dry weight~~ bleached and/or oxidised starch;
- water or a water-miscible liquid; and
- optionally, on or more other starchy materials and/or one or more additives.

12. (Original) A process according to claim 11 wherein the one or more other starchy materials are selected from one or more native starches, one or more modified starches, one or more flours and mixtures thereof.

13. (Currently Amended) A batter produced according to the method of claim 11 ~~or claim 12~~.

14. (Currently Amended) A food product coated with ~~Use of~~ a batter according to claim 13 ~~for coating food products~~.

15. (Currently Amended) A food product ~~Use~~ according to claim 14 wherein the food products are selected from: meat, poultry, fish, seafood, vegetable, potato, fruit, cheese and vegetarian products and mixtures thereof.

16. (Original) A method of preparing a batter-coated food product comprising coating a food product with a batter according to claim 13.

17. (Original) A method according to claim 16 wherein the food product is pre- or part-cooked before being coated.

18. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 16 ~~or claim 17~~ wherein the coated product is fried or par-fried and/or frozen.

19. (Currently Amended) A food product prepared according to the method of claim 16 ~~any one of claims 16-18~~.

20. (Original) A meat product coated with a batter comprising starch alkenyl succinate and bleached and/or oxidised starch.

21. (New) A batter mix according to claim 1, wherein said batter mix comprises 1.5-8% dry weight starch alkenyl succinate and 25-80% dry weight bleached and/or oxidized starch.

22. (New) A process according to claim 11, comprising mixing 1.5-10% dry weight starch alkenyl succinate and 25-80% dry weight bleached and/or oxidized starch.